



Media Education and the Creation of Purposeful Educational Content in Light of Technological Developments in Digital Communication Media: A Study on the Mechanisms and Prospects of Some MOOC Platforms

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Abstract

This research paper aims to identify the issue of creating educational and pedagogical content in the context of technological advancement and how media education has adapted to these changes. The study explores the mechanisms and technological means necessary to fulfill the desired institutional goals in training and education. It reviewed and analyzed several platforms dedicated to open education, such as MOOCs. The results highlight the diversity of mechanisms, particularly with the proliferation of digital communication methods and media. The future of education has shifted in crafting its content to meet the requirements of modern reception specificity and digital content creation mechanisms.

Keywords: Education; Media; Content; communication; Technology.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The media field has long-known simple tools and means for disseminating ideas, forming attitudes, and public opinion. Despite the simplicity of these means, they have effectively served their societal function during those periods. Humans used stones, fire, and wooden boards to convey messages and inform each other. They employed orators and callers in markets and public places for mass communication and shaping public opinion. The focus was largely on impact and audience in the early stages of media and communication research and issues. Gradually, it developed towards the inclination towards media content studies, especially after the emergence of the Internet and the change in message structure. Since media is intricately connected with education, educational content creation through open platforms has appeared prominently in the digital age and technology era due to its significance in fulfilling educational and media dimensions. This phenomenon has become more prominent after the COVID-19 pandemic, as it compelled societies to seek alternatives to traditional methods, particularly with the proliferation of digital media.

2. Problem Statement

The world has witnessed important transformations in the media field, particularly after the emergence of printing as the first phase of change in shaping global opinion, newspapers, pamphlets, and books played a substantial role in forming public opinion and trends, the second phase was marked by the emergence and spread of communication media, especially following World War II, and precisely after the appearance of intellectual currents and research schools in the forties and fifties. These schools analyzed, interpreted, and theorized the impacts of media and shaping public opinion. However, the most crucial phase is the one that emerged with the advent of the Internet and the dissemination of search engines and digital media for communication and media. This is particularly remarkable as it revealed significant capabilities in content creation and dissemination on a broader scale. As predicted by Marshall McLuhan and the theory of the global village, one of the domains experiencing profound changes is the realm of media, particularly since it is an industry and a strategic sector for many countries that have proven their dominance over the media, both technically and artistically, such as the United States of America.

This field possesses a set of tools making it subject to development and monitoring by those in charge. The process of shaping public opinion and trends is one of its most significant objectives and goals, particularly with the diversity and widespread availability of technological media. These characteristics have facilitated the flow, fluidity, and spread of information on a broader scale. Therefore, these transformations in the domain of media have been accompanied by the appearance of new perceptions and concepts that require attention, such as media literacy in the face of immense technological advancements, the production of media content, citizen



journalism, and purposeful media amidst the dissemination and digitization of media. In light of the aforementioned, we raise the following question:

What mechanisms are used to create purposeful educational content and fulfill sound media education in the context of the dissemination of digital communication media?

3. Concepts

3.1 Media Education

"It is the ability to create information and broadcast it efficiently, as well as the recipient's ability to interact with it." (Abada, 2018, p. 57).

3.2 Educational Content

"It is a type of curriculum that seeks to organize knowledge and experiences for the development and enhancement of skills." (<https://tarbiyaa.com/>).

3.3 Digital Communication Media

"Electronic media are tools operated by specialized organizations with considerable technological capabilities and capacities. They are characterized by speed, low costs, and great effectiveness in influencing." (Blondel, 2012, p. 7).

4. Media Education between Reality and Aspiration

Media has played a crucial role since ancient times, even in its traditional form, through its noble tasks, from informing about different developments to growing awareness, education, and teaching. Currently, with the dissemination of mass media, numbering in the thousands, including digital satellite channels and various media outlets that depend on the internet to broadcast their content, such as platforms, blogs, and pages, all these means have varied orientations and ideological affiliations, according to specific calendars and agendas. This diversity has made their content a substantial material for conveying messages and information to specific audiences, where the word "media" reflects partial perceptions of some components of the natural and social world directed towards specific audiences. (Kerneis, 2009, p. 98).

The question raised in this context is whether the globalization of the media field has played a role in changing the reality of educational media today, particularly since geography has become outside the tactical calculations of many media makers, primarily lobbyists, company owners, institutions, and major virtual spaces. These entities have found fertile ground for implementing their policies and plans directed at the masses within the Internet network. When talking about education as a value and media as a function, we must connect them to their current temporal context, imposing learning on everyone but in a way that aligns with the massive dissemination of sources and contents of different knowledge. With its various elements and diverse media, such as platforms, blogs, websites, and channels, the Internet is the present reality for learning in the abundance of digital communication and interaction tools, such as smartphones, tablets, and

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computers.

In discussing the utilization of the Internet as a means of learning (Al-Satalli, 2009, p. 22), the question in this context is whether educational media has benefited from this diversity in learning methods. Are there specific and universally accepted standards currently in place for determining how educational content, ethical and moral, should be created and disseminated concerning cultural, social, and economic differences, either for people or the audience groups targeted by media, such as children and adolescents in poor countries? Some studies have demonstrated the need for more in-depth research on certain social and cultural features, such as studies on students' situations and their relationships with research and the analysis of the school context itself as an influencing factor in data analysis. Accordingly, many of these studies lack information about the use of information technology by these segments (Stocchetti, 2014, p. 53). This prompts us to assert that establishing detailed and accurate databases, including different general and specific information about the various constituent categories of social strata is necessary. This enables us to present a clear picture of the ways of thinking and adopted behaviors, thereby reformulating an educational media policy that can be conducted by adopting a participatory strategy and approach more concerned with creating meaningful content that considers each audience's features. Currently, Media professionals are highly dependent on technology, and this task cannot be accomplished without continuous self-learning in all modern methods of investigation and information dissemination. This is because the value system changes with the development of societies and the spread of globalized content. In other words, all professions and practitioners' visions change according to evolving patterns, particularly social and cultural ones, showing the effect of modern media and communication tools. Professional development leads to continuous change in individuals' value systems for their professions (Slatnia, 2012, p. 28).

Even on a societal level, Western societies have adopted the concept of personal accompaniment in the media field (mediatic monitoring), which involves dedicating programs in media education to provide advice and training for different age groups. This is conducted through platforms and websites that include researchers and specialists in media and technology to accompany families in adjusting their consumption of media content. For instance, the Canadian Francophone-oriented platform, *l-express.ca*, specializes in assisting in the production and direction of cultural content for all segments of society, encompassing cultural and scientific institutions and organizations.

Although the efforts made by media professionals in the Arab world to spread awareness and promote a healthy media consumption culture, such as continuing to implement training policies approved by educational authorities responsible for academic training, universities in the Arab world are also adapting to these changes. For example, Algerian universities are updating different



knowledge, standards, and programs related to media and communication professions. This includes incorporating content and programs focusing on media ethics and recent issues and promoting field training and workshops on information acquisition and processing. Besides, specialized fields like electronic journalism, mass media, and media technologies have been opened, demonstrating the Algerian universities' efforts to adapt to technological advancements in the expanding digital space.

To complement the traditional presence-based educational approach, through lectures, practical sessions, and training workshops on how to write news, journalism editing, and producing digital content, educational platforms were also employed for distance learning before and during the emergence of the Coronavirus pandemic. The field of media training had a significant space in these digital spaces, where media students receive different explanations about the teaching content in audio and video format, in addition to applying their knowledge and everything covered by academic and media professionals participating in a radio and television studio equipped with modern technological means, to enable the student to adapt to the requirements of the media world by using all digital and technological means to produce and disseminate news according to the principles of professionalism and purposeful mission.

Private institutes and accredited academies, as partners in training and education in media and audiovisual professions, have also oriented themselves towards opening training opportunities, whether for university graduates, students, or interns, or for professionals, through programming regular and intensive courses, in some topics and areas related to media and audiovisual such as content assembly and processing, mobile journalism, editing techniques specific to digital media, etc. These courses are supervised by specialists in media training from academics and professionals, where trainees receive field training to qualify their knowledge and work methods according to developments and changes in the media field, particularly after the spread of alternative media on the Internet and the orientation of large popular segments towards obtaining news directly from citizens, especially those trained in the media field.

5. Prospects of territorial media and the virtual proximity aspect, and production of targeted digital content

The concept of proximity altered after the emergence and spread of virtual space, where the geographical aspect moved towards the digital aspect, which was the most influential medium in changing the information system, production, flow, and dissemination, changing many fields and activities, especially those related to the communication and media world. The concept of region and area linked to the geographical territory has also changed, as well as the way of transmitting information and the aspect of proximity, which refers to the inhabitants of that region or neighboring regions. This has made regional media transcend this logic, mainly since it has largely relied on information technology, such as digital radios broadcast over the Internet, electronic newspaper pages, and audiovisual media pages on social networks. Primarily, most

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media broadcasting content over the Internet provides, in particular, commenting and interaction with content producers because the audience has become a critical partner in the content creation (Naaman, 2015, p. 119).

The traditional concept of regional media refers to directing media messages to a specific community representing a region that includes several local communities. It is a media that arises from its environment (Ahmed Sayed, 2004, p. 84). A deeper examination of this definition leads to observing the use of keywords that express media counting and the media's targeting function. Media content is a message that holds meanings and values. Targeting is the process of directing content towards a specific category or community.

In the same context, a question arises about the role of this local and regional media in light of the changing specificity of local communities, which now have distinct spaces; the geographical reality and the digital virtual space.

Lissner and Hummel indicated that virtual communities are a new form of communication where community members share information and knowledge for mutual learning or problem-solving (Ulrike & Hummel, 2002, p.41). This technological background has created a space that includes diverse cultural communities linked through different means, surpassing the barrier of physical location. These communities now employ web-connected platforms that provide a more interactive and enriched environment. According to Al Arab Al-Iqtisadiyah Al-Dawliyah newspaper, electronic platforms have become the new environment for various fields. Products or services that lack an electronic platform to be controlled become a thing of the past. Electronic platforms have altered user culture and lifestyle, especially in the business and service sectors (www.aleqt.com). Media institutions are among the sectors aspiring to change the pattern of information spread and create purposeful media content. This includes traditional institutions striving to adapt to the spread of digital media and enter the mass consumer market by expanding their market scope and operations through modern information and communication technology and modern digital institutions that have initiated their activities in electronic digital form. However, they all share one common goal: adapting their content to the profound transformations in different fields and attempting to emphasize the social responsibility aspect in their media activities.

In the midst of that organized chaos in the media world, some actors or partners in the media sector seek to educate and modify consumer behavior toward content, particularly through digital spaces that possess technological features making them easier and more accessible. The goal is to fulfill purposeful education by creating content that considers each community's social and cultural specificities. The digital content industry mainly depends on publishing activities that employ electronic mediums such as books, newspapers, magazines, software, videos, and audio-visual materials in digital form (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005,



p.7).

To further demonstrate this, we will present some platforms and channels that have taken on the task of producing purposeful educational content :

- **Eduscol / éducation** : A French-Swiss educational platform includes a Swiss digital channel established in 2008 under the name "le temps." The platform fosters and enhances education, promoting responsible consumption and sound media literacy. It offers audio-visual presentations of specific events through a dedicated channel for media education called U-TV. Participants are invited to write media content, and later, the platform provides the fundamentals of journalistic editing, content semiotics, digitization, and other related topics. The platform focuses on the following key themes and subjects :

5.1 Learning with Digital Technology: Educational Practices with Digital Technology that include several gateways :

- **Edubase**: It is a national database containing educational scenarios focused on employing and integrating digital tools in work. The content targets age groups from preschool to pre-university. It seeks to create familiarity and teach a working method by training apprentices in digital technology and various media. Students strive to balance work and domestic consumption in the home and work environments to promote the educational use of digital technology. A laboratory for digital practices has been established to encourage participation and educational meetings on important topics. Moreover, it provides training for instructors and teachers on employing digital tools and equipment, enabling them to control digital education.

- **Prim à bord**: It is a digital portal for primary education, including the Scientix program which brings together teachers, researchers, and stakeholders from European institutions. Recently, it has become a cross-border collaborative network seeking to improve performance and exchange knowledge in technology and new educational curricula. It also includes the European School Net program, comprising 34 European education ministries and aims to share expertise in all educational fields, encompassing media education, how to interact with digital media, and how to use them to raise awareness and knowledge and improve performance (www.eduscol.fr) in specialized educational media.

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Fig.1. Training session on U-TV channel to benefit students in journalism editing



The number of websites and platforms focusing on digitalization and media education has been growing, particularly in some European countries like France. This is mainly apparent with the encouragement of government authorities to foster media education at different stages of education, specifically for students and professionals in electronic media. There are many educational channels on electronic networks and platforms, and one that caught our attention is "les tutos de l'info," which translates to "tutorials of the news." It is part of a strategic educational project by the Higher School of Journalism in Lille, France. It strives to provide training, knowledge, and tips about the media profession.

The teaching method takes the form of audiovisual content broadcasted through the website and YouTube. It focuses on media professions, especially three aspects: journalism work, investigative journalism, and publishing and broadcasting. The content is demonstrated in the form of educational videos by the program supervisor and some expert guests in the field of media. This educational content is supplemented with a technical card that includes different technical information covered in the modules and information about available sources and data. Besides, exercises and questions related to the content are provided which mainly targets young people who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of media.



Fig.2. Interface of the educational channel "les tutos de l'info."



6. Training Platforms and websites

This module will present examples of platforms and websites in different countries worldwide that focus on media and communication in social networks. Most of these digital spaces highlight the dangers of the current situation, particularly for certain groups in society, ranging from media professionals to children, teenagers, and socially disadvantaged groups encountering difficult living conditions. For instance, the French authorities approved a website called Media Education (<https://www.mediaeducation.fr/fr/Accueil.htm>). Its main mission is media education and freedom of expression.

The website covers different topics and discussions that address the dangers of uncontrolled information and the negative effects of misinformation, especially among children. It also introduces topics associated with creating meaningful content and publishing it on dedicated blogs according to sound work and media reception standards, enabling information creators and messengers to construct content properly, and recipients can receive and process it consciously and healthily. An example is the diverse educational and awareness content targeting children exposed to different media channels. Media education programs' creators focus on protection and highlight teaching children how to identify media content critically, determine viewing time, and responsibly use media and communication technologies to stimulate creativity.

The remarkable aspect of this website lies in its clear and well-thought-out strategy. It includes a roadmap that fosters scientific and knowledge exchange among media actors, particularly journalists. The website offers lectures, certifications, audiovisual content, and training sessions. This is an example of a proposal submitted by one of the activists in the field.

6.1 Website:

(Je suis vidéothécaire à la médiathèque de Drancy et je recherche un(e) intervenant(e) spécialiste de l'information sur internet : complotisme, fake news, etc. Nous souhaitons projeter le film Internet "la démocratie des crédules" samedi 13 février et nous ferons suivre cette projection d'une discussion avec le public. Y aurait-il parmi vous une personne disponible et intéressée pour

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participer à cette rencontre ?)

The activist states that she is a video maker working at the media library in Drancy. She seeks for a lecturer to present on internet media, specifically fake news, conspiracy theories, and similar topics. She also hopes to screen *The Democracy of the Gullible* on February 13th, followed by a discussion about the film. She asks if anyone is interested and available to participate.

After exploring and analyzing some elements and components of the website's content, we have concluded that the website strives to promote proper standards in media education. It endeavours to disseminate freedom of expression and reject all forms of racism and destructive ideas that impact content creators and recipients alike. The website also introduces digital alternatives, meaningful discussions, and knowledge exchange among different actors in the field. Besides, it provides training and support by allocating spaces for both beginner and professional media practitioners to continue their educational efforts through the platform or their platforms, provided they possess the necessary professional qualifications for purposeful media communication

Fig.3. Media Edukasyo platform dedicated to media education.



6.2 Self-training and digital media literacy through the web, MOOC model

Important developments in the technological and digital field have contributed to expanding virtual space into immeasurable realms. However, it is now possible to measure them digitally using variables that have benefited from online spaces. Hence, we refer particularly to the domain of virtual self-training. In media, news, and qualifying individuals working in the sector, a notable



dissemination and diversity have been observed, primarily in some countries like France, for instance, in offering remote training opportunities in media professions, specifically digital ones.

In general, and particularly in Algeria and other Arab countries, many countries are working to develop educational technology through available online spaces to keep up with the process of updating knowledge and relying on their economy. They seek to invest in it as a promising strategic sector. Among these countries are Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates which target media and digitalization through programs and initiatives, revealing their future intentions to develop a promising field and industry contributing to advancing media professions. This is achieved by adopting effective content creation and dissemination strategies according to technology requirements and the audience's desires.

Previously, we discussed the training methods employed in educational institutions in many countries, primarily rely on traditional academic approaches such as lectures, applications, and workshops carried out by professors and instructors with theoretical backgrounds. However, with the spread of digital technology and the multitude of communication channels and media, distance learning has become a prominent method. One of its greatest advantages is overcoming the geographical barrier to foster diverse participation of learners and experts worldwide, facilitating self-training for media professionals and diversified their knowledge, ultimately improving the effectiveness and precision of their work.

Following the periodic training courses offered in certain private institutions and schools in the media field, a group of active journalists sought to establish a network of media professionals. They launched the International Journalists' Network (IJNet) under the auspices of the International Center for Journalists. This network provides opportunities for exchanging experiences and knowledge, news applications, tips, and training for professional journalists, beginners, and even citizens in the Arab world and globally, in multiple languages. This network's website provides valuable information and knowledge used for self-development of skills and professional media practice. The website administrators have introduced a distance education method that brings together many learners through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses).

The International Journalists' Network provides information about courses and audiovisual lessons offered in many universities worldwide in media training and news sciences. The difference between virtual conferences and open platforms for distance learning is significant, especially considering that education through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) relies on continuous training over weeks, delivered for free through videos and texts. It also includes assignments and works that are evaluated and discussed. Some advantages of this type of platform include:

- High-quality and effective education: Learners, even experienced practitioners, acquire new knowledge and work mechanisms that help enhance their skills.
- Flexibility and ease of accessing educational content at any time.

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- Adaptability to emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Facilitating exchange and dialogue between cultures based on a comprehensive understanding and critical perspective of reality while eliminating traditional barriers that hinder the transfer of information and knowledge.
- Staying connected with the International Center for Journalists, which promotes continuous training.

The French educational platform "My MOOC" specializes in several disciplines and professions, especially those that keep up with the developments in the domains of economy and technology. It provides a search engine that enables learners to access any course. For instance, in the media field, one can follow courses on culture and digital writing for six weeks, delivered by trainers and experts in media and digitalization, allowing the learner to learn the basics of writing, participation, publishing, and communication. The University of Bordeaux supervises these courses in collaboration with other universities. The content is divided into three units each week. The first unit covers general concepts, the second focuses on practical work, and the third discusses the learner's thinking process and working style.

Through this model in digital media, this platform aims to provide interns and learners with an opportunity for self-training in the field of independent digital media. It professionally uses technology and provides available knowledge to develop critical thinking and improve working methods through the spaces and media facilitated by technology and disseminated via the internet to create simple, organized, and meaningful content.

6.3 Digital Culture and Digital Writing Course Program :

- Week 1: Designing and organizing a digital project: blog.
- Week 2: Basics and principles of digitization.
- Week 3: Digital writing and the use of symbols and electronic editing.
- Week 4: Implementing the project on the ground with collaborative work and the rules of intellectual property and copyright.
- Week 5: Introduction to journalistic work via websites and blog management mechanisms.
- Week 6: Networking and how to choose the type of spaces.

In Arab countries, for instance, some countries are attempting to generalize remote training operations, particularly after the emergence and proliferation of the COVID-19 pandemic. This exceptional circumstance has provided ideal opportunities for training and requalification in many specialties, including media and news production. According to an article in Oman Daily by Dr. Amar Al Balushi published in April 2020, the pandemic conditions have introduced new and important opportunities for training in different specialties through intensified education via electronic platforms. In Algeria, some professors have established two platforms on Facebook,



one called "A Kaatib" and the other the National Platform for Media and Communication Sciences, both seeking to support students and researchers in the field of media and communication by providing them with content and books related to media and related specialties, in addition to organizing occasional sessions with specialists.

7. CONCLUSION

In all its forms and media, modern technology is regarded as one of humanity's most important transformations in recent centuries. Its impact has been pervasive across all sectors, with the field of media and communication particularly affected due to their shared function of managing information and communication through diverse channels. Consequently, the field of education has expanded its scope to encompass digitalization and media, seeking to explore ways to develop purposeful content that respects the unique characteristics and cultures of different societies. The ultimate goal is to contribute to responsible and meaningful media, where the most important outcomes can be summarized as follows:

- The widespread adoption of open platforms for distance education, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Educational platforms rely on electronic editing mechanisms and techniques.
- Media education has significantly shifted towards educational platforms, especially for children.
- Reliance on electronic communication and media is one of the most significant pillars of transferring specialized knowledge.
- The production of educational content is governed by rules and mechanisms controlled by technology.
- The fate of traditional education is contingent upon the extent of the spread of digital media and specialized platforms.
- The diversification of educational content for adults and children, focusing on specialized technical knowledge.
- Western countries and some Arab countries are moving towards activating accredited platforms for open education as a necessity rather than an option.

To generalize the culture of media education and employ digitalization and technology for the development of media in all its forms, we suggest the following recommendations:

- Arab countries must build a comprehensive and unified vision to generalize the culture of media education through the exchange of ideas, experiences, and visits between practitioners and academics.
- Training in digital media and media technology and how to create electronic content.
- Encouraging researchers' mobility and project exchange in the communication, media, and

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information fields.

- Generalizing the teaching of media education in the early stages of education.
- Organizing training courses on the use of digital and purposeful media.
- Encouraging researchers and students to innovate platforms and programs for self-education in media.

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